2008-09

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

Opera in Season!

University of Toronto MacMillan Singers
University of Toronto Master Chorale
High Park Choirs

Saturday, December 6, 2008
7:30 pm. MacMillan Theatre

Program

HIGH PARK CHOIRS
Zimfira Poloz, conductor
Sheldon Rose, piano

Adiemus — **Karl Jenkins** (b. 1944)
Zai Itchoiten — **Javier Busto** (b. 1949)
Winter's Night, from Norwegian Sami Songs — **Frode Fjellheim** (b. 1959)
Uberlebengross — **Stephen Hatfield** (b. 1956)

MACMILLAN SINGERS WITH HIGH PARK CHOIRS
Caron Daley, graduate student conductor
Christopher Dawes, piano

Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute), Act II Finale — **W. A. Mozart** (1756–1791)

Pamina: Sarah Iles
Tamino: Patrick Jang
Papageno: Vasil Garvanliev
Sarastro: Jerod Bertram
Queen of the Night: Eliza Johnson
1st Lady: Laurel Perkins
2nd Lady: Melanie Lamoureux
3rd Lady: Lynn McMurray
Monostatos: Andrew Haji

Drei Knaben:
Knabe 1: Holly Chaplin, Amy Salmers, Melody Thomas
Knabe 2: Robin Daprato, Stephanie Domingues, Sara Schabas,
Knabe 3: Katy Johnston, Alexandra Park, Jeanne Yuen

Tim Crouch, flute, Elaine Choi, celeste

- INTERMISSION -

MACMILLAN SINGERS
Doreen Rao, conductor
Christopher Dawes, piano

O Magnum Mysterium — **Morten Lauridsen** (b. 1943)
Magnificat — **John Burge** (b. 1961)
Fecit Potentiam — **Alberto Grau** (b. 1937)

Caron Daley, soprano, Mark Oracion, tenor, Patrick Murray, baritone, Ken Yang, bass

Wehinachten no. 6 from Sechs Sprüche, op. 79 — **Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy** (1809-1847)
Es wird ein Stern, Chorus from Christus, op. 97 — **Mendelssohn**
Vom Himmel hoch, I — **Mendelssohn**

MACMILLAN SINGERS, MASTER CHORALE, HIGH PARK CHOIRS
Doreen Rao, conductor

Babes in Toyland (selections from Act II) **Victor Herbert** (1859-1924)

"Hail to Toyland"	Chorus of Toyshop Workers
"Toyland"	Master Toymaker and Chorus
"Just a Toy"	Jill and Treble Chorus
"Beatrice Barefacts"	Mary, Marmaduke, and Treble Chorus
"March of the Toys"	Principals and Chorus
"Just a Whisper Away"	Mary and Alan
"Finale: Toyland"	Chorus

Soloists:

Master Toymaker – Ryan Allen
Jill – Melanie Lamoureaux
Mary – Eliza Johnson
Marmaduke – Patrick Murray
Alan – Andrew Haji

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Program Notes

Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute), Act II Finale
W.A. MOZART (1756-1791)

Mozart wrote his great singspiel, *Die Zauberflöte K.620*, in the spring of 1791. In this last year of his life, Mozart accepted an offer to compose a popular-style opera from his long-standing friend, theater impresario Emanuel Shikaneder. Their efforts were enthusiastically received at the Freihaus-Theater auf der Weiden on September 30, 1791. The libretto, written by Schikaneder, is an allegorical tale of enlightenment based on the ideals of Freemasonry. Drawing from popular German fairy-tales, Abbé Jean Terrasson's novel *Sethos*, and the essay, "On the Mysteries of the Egytpians", the libretto is uplifting in tone, with playful scenarios, amorous love affairs, and an archetypal battle between good and evil. Mozart's music is accordingly full of variety, with catchy melodies, majestic choruses, rage-arias, and a chorale-prelude in the style of Bach. Comedic situations are combined with opera seria drama, and simple folk-like music contrasts with virtuosic vocal pyrotechnics.

The central story line relates Tamino's search for love and eventual initiation into the mysteries of Isis. Tamino's spiritual quest is pitted against the comic love story of Papageno, a lonely birdcatcher. Both characters are at the mercy of the forces of good and evil, the Queen of the Night and Sarastro. In the Act II Finale, Tamino and Papageno conclude their journeys, and justice is restored for all.

In the opening scene of the Finale, the drei Knaben sing of the dawning of a new era, where superstition will vanish and wisdom will reign. Pamina enters distraught; close to suicide because of her unrequited love for Tamino. The three spirit-boys calm her, and insist that Tamino does indeed love her, and is

fighting death for her. In the next scene, we find Tamino facing the armed guards of the temple. They admonish that the path to purification is treacherous, and conquering fear of death is the only way to enlightenment. Tamino pursues the challenge with Pamina by his side, and by the power of the Magic Flute, they are successful! The chorus celebrates the noble couple's victory. Pagageno, sadly, is not having success, and is convinced that he will never find his love, Papagena. As he prepares to hang himself, the drei Knaben arrive and remind him of the power of his magical bells. He rings them merrily, and Papagena instantly appears. They sing a joyful duet about the large family they will create. In the last scene, the Queen of the Night, her three ladies, and Monostatos enter the temple furtively, in a final attempt to destroy the realm of Sarastro. Through thunder and lightening, their strength is shattered, and Sarastro plunges them into eternal night. A final chorus hails the consecration of Tamino and Pamina, praising Osiris and Isis for their everlasting crown of beauty and wisdom.

As the most often performed German opera in the repertoire today, *Die Zauberflöte* continues to delight audiences with its musical ingenuity and thematic universality. (Note by Caron Daley)

O Magnum Mysterium
MORTON LAURIDSEN (b.1943)

Morton Lauridsen's *O Magnum Mysterium* was premiered in 1994 by the Los Angeles Master Chorale, conducted by Paul Salamunovitch. Since then, it has become a favorite of hundreds of choirs around the world, making it one of the most performed contemporary choral pieces in the literature. The text is a Responsory for the Matins of Christmas and although there is no biblical reference for the two animals being present at the manger, their presence has been included in artistic and musical portrayals from very early on. Lauridsen's characteristic compositional language of warm, rich harmonies is present throughout. (Note by Mark Vuorinen)

Magnificat
JOHN BURGE (b.1961)

Known also as the Song of Mary, the *Magnificat* is found in the opening chapter of Luke's gospel. The text describes in first person the elation and blessedness that overcomes Mary as she relates the impending birth of Jesus to her sister, Elizabeth. John Burge's *a cappella* choral setting of the *Magnificat* is structured in seven movements. Tonight's performance includes only the first movement. In this work, Burge often divides the choir into six or more parts, which in turn generates a rich harmonic colour or contrapuntal density. (Note by the composer).

Fecit Potentiam
ALBERTO GRAU (b.1931)

Alberto Grau, born in Nov 7, 1931, Spain, is arguably one of the most influential contemporary Venezuelan composers of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. As a renowned choral conductor, Grau is particularly interested in composing for choruses and body percussions. Grau is a nationalistic composer and his works display unique characteristics found commonly in Venezuelan music: the Latin American and Spanish influences to Venezuelan culture can be seen in his compositional technique. *Fecit Potentiam* is a movement from a larger multi-movement setting of the *Magnificat*. Alberto Grau is the Faculty of Music's *Michael and Sonja Koerner Distinguished Visitor in Composition* and will be delivering workshops and lectures in November 2008. (Note by Elaine Choi)

Weinachten
FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY (1809-1847)

Weihnachten is one of the six anthems from the choral cycle *Sechs Sprüche*, by Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy written between 1843 and 1846. These unaccompanied 8 voices anthems were commissioned by Friedrich

Wilhelm IV for the Berlin Cathedral. They cover the main festivals of the liturgical year from Advent to Ascension. The texts were some of the King's favourites, central to the German protestant liturgy. *Weihnachten* is the anthem written for Christmas. The joyful characteristic of this anthem portrays the happiness of the people: celebrating life, land and the arrival of the Saviour. (Note by Elaine Choi)

Es wird ein Stern
FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY

This chorus is a component of Mendelssohn's unfinished oratorio, *Christus, Op. 97*. Published posthumously in 1852, *Christus* remains a mystery to musicologists as it is difficult to ascertain when Mendelssohn composed the extant material or what his plans for finishing it might have been. The work was to have been a dramatic account of the entire life of Christ. The opening section of the work, dealing with the birth of Christ, features this chorus, *Es wird ein Stern aus Jakob aufgeh'n*, or "There shall a star from Jacob come forth". Mendelssohn reaffirms his esteem for the German chorale with his use of the Epiphany hymn: *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*. (Note by Mark Vuorinen)

Vom Himmel Hoch
FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY

Mendelssohn's *Vom Himmel Hoch* is a multi-movement setting of Martin Luther's hymn of the same name. It comes from a period in the early 1830's when sacred music held a prominent place in Mendelssohn's compositional output. The three choral movements are varied treatments of the melody of Luther's hymn, while the arias use only the text of the hymn. Mendelssohn's use of German chorales as the basis of his eight chorale cantatas is an homage to J.S. Bach, a composer for whom he had tremendous admiration. (Note by Mark Vuorinen)

Babes in Toyland
VICTOR HERBERT

Irish-American composer Victor Herbert (1859 - 1924) led a vibrant life as a composer, conductor, and cellist. Herbert was well known as a composer of popular music in 20th-century America, yet also composed music of the Classical genre, including a Cello Concerto in E minor. Although he composed for different genres and mediums, Herbert was best known for his operettas. Among his output of such medium, *Babes in Toyland*, *Mlle. Modiste*, and *The Red Mill* were a few of his best known works.

Babes in Toyland, with libretto by Glen MacDonough, premiered on Broadway in New York, in 1903. It is a light operetta that combines two of the most familiar themes to children: Mother Goose nursery rhymes and Christmas. The story begins with Jane and Alan, who are the wards of their Uncle Barnaby, a wicked man who plots their death by shipwreck. Somehow, Jane and Alan are saved, and end up in Toyland. Jane and Alan cross paths with Alan's beloved Contrary Mary, and her brother Tom-Tom, and altogether, they seek the Master Toymaker, an evil genius who secretly plots with Barnaby to create toys that kill. Instead, the dolls kill the Toymaker, and chaos ensues. Barnaby accuses Alan of plotting the murder of the Toymaker, yet Alan is exonerated. In light of his unsuccessful attempts, Barnaby makes a final move to poison and kill Alan with a glass of poisoned wine, but accidentally drinks it, and dies. Alan marries Contrary Mary, and they all live happily ever after with their fortune. Tonight's selections include numbers from Act II and Act III (Note by Jeanne Yuen).

UPCOMING CHOIRS IN CONCERT

Vox Femina - Universit Women's Chorus, Robert Cooper, conductor,
with the University of Guelph Women's Choir, Marta McCarthy, conductor
Friday, February 13, 2009
7:30 pm. Christ Church Deer Park, 1570 Yonge Street. $14($8 seniors/students)

Biographies

Dr. Doreen Rao is a distinguished musician and scholar whose work as a conductor and teacher links the standards of professional performance with the goals of music education. Celebrated for her spirited and moving concerts, Dr. Rao's commitment to choral music is recognized in her worldwide appearances as conductor, master class teacher and speaker and in her award-winning Choral Music Experience publications with Boosey & Hawkes. Appointed to the University of Toronto Faculty of Music as the *Elmer Iseler Chair in Conducting*, Doreen Rao has founded the Centre for Advanced Studies in Choral Music, an innovative university enrichment program which connects emerging young singers, conductors, and composers with prominent artists and educators. As Director of Choral Programs, Dr. Rao conducts the MacMillan Singers and the Bach Festival Singers in concerts and collaborations with Helmuth Rilling, Peter Oundjian and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Nexus, the Elmer Iseler Singers and the University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

The **University of Toronto MacMillan Singers** was founded in 1994 by Doreen Rao to celebrate the legacy of Sir Ernest MacMillan, an inspired performer and devoted teacher who influenced every aspect of Canada's musical life. This award-winning ensemble conducted by Doreen Rao regularly performs with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Peter Oundjian. The MacMillan Singers enjoy numerous collaborations with Helmuth Rilling, Nexus, the Elmer Iseler Singers and the Gryphon Trio. Recent seasons have included Festival performances of Bach Cantatas, Mozart C minor Mass, Stravinsky *Les Noces*, and the Mozart Requiem. In October 2007, the MacMillan Singers performed the *St. John Passion BWV 245* in the Toronto Bach Festival.

Zimfira Poloz is a highly respected conductor, educator and adjudicator with a distinguished international reputation. She has been decorated with numerous awards in her long career, including the Honoured Representative of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan Award, the city of Hamilton's V.I.P. Award, and more recently, the Leslie Bell Prize Award for Choral Conducting from the Ontario Art Council. She is invited regularly to serve as a clinician for festivals and workshops, and has served on the jury of the several international choir competitions, including the renowned Choir Olympics.

Zimfira established her musical credentials in Kazakhstan, founding the country's first Choir School. In addition to her duties as Principal of the school, she also served as Artistic Director and Conductor of the school's Concert Choir, Koktem. Under the direction of Ms. Poloz, Koktem earned international acclaim and was a frequent prize-winner at choral competitions and festivals around the world.

Since arriving in Canada, Ms. Poloz has served on the artistic staff for the Toronto Children's Chorus and as vocal coach at St. Michael's Choir School; she is currently the Artistic Director for the Hamilton Children's Choir and has been the Artistic Director for the High Park Choirs of Toronto since 2004. In addition to her global travels as a clinician and conductor, Ms. Poloz teaches Vocal Pedagogy for Young Choirs at the University of Toronto.

Founded as a girl's choir in 1986 by Ann Cooper Gay, the **High Park Choirs** now include girls and boys who sing in many languages and explore the rich heritage of cultures that make up the Canadian mosaic. In 2004, the award winning Zimfira Poloz joined High Park Choirs as Artistic Director. The Choirs regularly participate in workshops, community performances and local competitions. In addition to joining with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra on several occasions the Choir has appeared on national television, including appearing with the Holly Cole Trio. The Choir can be heard on the award-winning Classical Kids as well as on the Kindermusik educational series. International invitational appearances have included the "Sing for Pleasure" Festival in Norwich, England and a 10-day European tour that included the Bonn (Germany) International Choral Festival and concerts in the Netherlands and Belgium. The Choirs have also toured in Ontario, Quebec, Newfoundland, Virginia and Upstate New York; plans are currently being made for a tour in Germany in the summer of 2009.

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Sae Ha Youn
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Dong Jun Lee
Emil Azuma Prikryl
Eran Rozenszajn
Tae Won Yi

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